



Acquiring Micro-level NCES Data

Module Objectives

- Describe what constitutes public-use versus restricted-use data
- Describe the process for acquiring public-use micro-level datasets and supporting materials
- Describe the process for acquiring restricted-use micro-level datasets and supporting materials

Micro-Level Data

What are Micro-Level Data?

- Information at the level of individual respondents
- Variables recorded separately for every responding person or entity
- Examples of microdata:
 - Individual responses to survey items
 - Each respondent's demographic characteristics
 - Individual student academic achievement scores



Steps for Protecting Respondent Confidentiality

Step	Restricted-Use	Public-Use
1. All direct identifiers are removed	X	X
2. Perturbations are introduced	X	X
3. Disclosure risk analyses are conducted to identify potential disclosures		X
4. Data protections in the form of coarsening or suppression are applied		X

Acquiring Public-Use Datasets

- Restricted-use data files contain more detailed information than the public-use files
- Survey information and documentation can be accessed and downloaded from the appropriate NCES study website
- Data products and survey publications can be located and downloaded using the electronic catalog at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/>
- Data can either be downloaded directly from a survey website using one of the NCES data tools (e.g., eDAT) or mailed to the requestor on a CD-ROM/DVD
- Specific instructions for acquiring NCES datasets are given in the DLDT survey-specific modules



Restricted-Use Data

- Contain individually identifiable information that is confidential and protected by law
- Researchers interested in accessing restricted-use data must apply for a license from NCES
- There are significant criminal penalties for knowingly publishing or communicating any individually identifiable information
- Laws provide for security and confidentiality of personal data



Restricted-Use License Information

- Contract through which IES/NCES loans a qualified organization the data under certain terms and conditions
- Requestor must
 - State a justification for the data use
 - Submit required documents
 - Agree to keep the data secure from unauthorized disclosure at all times
 - Agree to unscheduled inspections by the IES data security personnel to ensure compliance
 - Agree not to publish or release unrounded, unweighted counts (n's)
 - Agree to submit all work products to NCES for disclosure review prior to sharing with anyone not authorized on the same license
- Two types of permissions
 - Restricted-Use License (Universities, Organizations)
 - Memorandum of Understanding (Federal Agencies)

Parties to a License



Online Procedures for Requesting a New License

Statistical Standards Program

Restricted-use Data Licenses

This online application system is for organizations interested in obtaining restricted-use data. Our goal is to maximize the use of statistical information, while protecting individually identifiable information from disclosure. This Electronic Application System was created to facilitate the restricted-use data application process, as well as to explain the laws and regulations governing these data. It is also used to process users' requests for License amendments. Additional information about the licensing process is in the [Accessing and Using Restricted-use Data FAQ](#), [Licensing Procedures FAQ](#), and [IES Restricted-use Data Procedures Manual](#). Remaining questions can be answered by sending an email to IESData.Security@ed.gov.

To access an existing License, use the link you received when you first applied for the License. If you do not have this link, go to the system login page and use your License number and the PPO's email address to generate an email with a link to your License.

IMPORTANT

- This system serves as the mechanism to submit a Formal Request and for the IES Data Security Office to conduct an electronic review of your Formal Request and various responses.
- The Licensee is responsible for submitting the completed and signed License document, Security Plan Form, and Affidavits of Nondisclosure in hard copy to IES after receiving an initial review of the online Formal Request.
- The Licensee is responsible for all terms and provisions in the License and the Security Plan.
- Under no circumstances may restricted-use data, in any form, be removed or be communicated from the Licensee's secure project office.
- Licensees are subject to unannounced, scheduled inspections to assess compliance with security requirements.
- Violations of the confidentiality provisions (Section 183) of the Education Science Reform Act, as incorporated in the License, subject the Licensee to possible prosecution for a class E felony and imprisonment for up to five years, and/or a fine of up to \$250,000.

[Getting Started >>>](#)

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Online Procedures for Requesting a New License (Continued)

#	Step	Requirements
1	Learn About the Licensure Process	Read through the information on the "Getting Started" page at http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/instruct.asp
2	Download, review, and complete documentation requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IES License Document (contract) Affidavits of Nondisclosure (signed and notarized) Security Plan Form Restricted-Use Data Procedures Manual <p>NOTE: The manual is not a submitted document but is one that you must read and confirm as part of the application process. The manual can be accessed at: http://nces.ed.gov/statprog/rudman/</p>
3	Complete online application	<p>PPO must submit formal request, with the following information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PPO, SO, and SSO contact information The name(s) of the dataset (e.g., ECLS-B 9-month-Kindergarten 2007 DVD) The purpose for the loan of the data, including justification for needing the restricted-use data The length of time you will need the data (Maximum of 5 years)
4	Mail required documentation	<p>Submit hard copies of your License Document, Affidavit(s), and Security Plan Form to</p> <p>IES Data Security Office U.S. Department of Education/IES/NCES 550 12th Street, SW Room 4060 Washington, DC 20202</p>
5	Submit questions, if necessary	Questions can be emailed to IESData.Security@ed.gov

Amending an Existing License

- Request amendments to an existing license when you
 - Add researchers
 - Remove researchers
 - Add more data
- Use license number and PPO's e-mail address to obtain a URL link to the license

Module Summary and Resources

Summary

- Described what constitutes public-use versus restricted-use data
- Described the process for acquiring public-use micro-level datasets and supporting materials
- Described the process for acquiring restricted-use micro-level datasets

Resources

- [Publications & Products Search](#)
- [Restricted-Use Data Licenses](#)
- [Restricted-Use Data Procedures Manual](#)
- IESData.Security@ed.gov